

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1773.]

NEW-YORK

OR,
GENERAL

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JOURNAL;

THE
ADVERTISER.

both FOREIGN and DOMESTIC.

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Wheat per Bushel	8/ 6d	Beef per Barrel	55/ 0d
Flour	23 6	Pork	5 0 0
Brown Bread	22 6	Salt	2/ 10 2 10
West India Rum	4 0	Bohea Tea	4 0
New-England ditto	3 8	Chocol per Doz.	27 0
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Single refin'd ditto	5 1	Indian Corn per Bush.	4 8
Molasses	2 0	Wood	22 to 38 0

High-Water at New-York, and Sun's Rising and Setting, till Thursday next

Day's Age	High Water	Rises	H. M.	Sets	H. M.
Thursday	4	22	after 6	32	before 6
Friday	5	2	6	30	6
Saturday	6	1	6	29	6
Sunday	7	2	6	28	6
Monday	8	3	6	27	6
Tuesday	9	4	6	27	6
Wednesday	10	4	6	25	6

Days 10 Hours 56 Min. the 25th.

BOSTON, February 1, 1773.
In the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 27, 1773.

ORDERED, That Mr. Adams, Mr. Hancock, Mr. Bacon, Col. Bowers, Mr. Hawley, Capt. Darby, Mr. Phillips, Col. Thayer, and Col. Stockbridge, be a Committee to wait on his Excellency the Governor with the following ANSWER to his SPEECH, to both Houses, at the opening of this Session.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

YOUR Excellency's Speech to the General Assembly at the opening of this Session, has been read with great attention in this House.

We fully agree with your Excellency, that our own happiness as well as his Majesty's service very much depends upon peace and order; and we shall at all times take such measures as are consistent with our constitution and the rights of the people to promote and maintain them. That the government at present is in a very disturbed state is apparent; But we cannot ascribe it to the people's having adopted unconstitutional principles, which seems to be the cause assigned for it by your Excellency. It appears to us to have been occasioned rather, by the British House of Commons assuming and exercising a power, inconsistent with the freedom of the constitution, to give and grant the property of the Colonies, and appropriate the same without their consent.

It is needless for us to enquire what were the principles that induced the councils of the nation to take new and unprecedented a measure. But when the Parliament by an act of their own, expressly declared, that the King, Lords and Commons of the nation "have, had, and of right ought to have full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the Colonies and people of America, subject to the Crown of Great-Britain, in all cases whatever;" and in consequence hereof another revenue act was made, the minds of the people were filled with anxiety, and they were justly alarmed with apprehensions of the total extinction of their Liberties.

The result of the free enquiries of many persons into the right of the Parliament to exercise such a power over the Colonies, seems in your Excellency's opinion to be the cause of what you are now to call the present "disturbed and dissatisfied state of the government;" upon which you have any longer consistent with your duty to the King and your regard to the interest of the Province, to lay communicating your sentiments." But the principles adopted in consequence hereof, being unconstitutional, is a subject of enquiry. We know of no such disorders arising therefrom as are mentioned by your Excellency. If grand juries have not on their oaths found such offences, as your Excellency with the advice of his Majesty's Council have ordered to be prosecuted, it is to be presumed they have followed the dictates of good conscience. They are the constitutional judges of these matters, and it is not to be supposed that moved from corrupt principles, they have suffered offenders to escape a prosecution, and thus supported and encour-

aged them to go on offending. If any part of authority, shall in an unconstitutional manner; interfere in any matter, it will be no wonder if it is brought into contempt; to the lessening or confounding of that subordination which is necessary to a well regulated state. Your Excellency's representation that the bands of government are weakened, we humbly conceive to be without good grounds; though we must own the heavy burdens unconstitutionally brought upon the people have been and still are universally and very justly complained of as a grievance.

You are pleased to say, that "when our Predecessors first took possession of this Plantation or Colony, under a Grant and Charter from the Crown of England, it was their sense and it was the sense of the kingdom, that they were to remain subject to the supreme authority of Parliament;" whereby we understand your Excellency to mean in the sense of the declaratory act of Parliament aforementioned, in all cases whatever. And indeed it is difficult, if possible, to draw a line of distinction between the universal authority of Parliament over the Colonies and no authority at all. It is therefore necessary for us to enquire how it appears, for your Excellency has not shown it to us, that when, or at the time that our Predecessors took possession of this Plantation or Colony, under a Grant and Charter from the Crown of England, it was their sense, and the sense of the kingdom, that they were to remain subject to the supreme authority of Parliament. We are, however, in your Excellency's recommendation, treat the subject with candour and candour, and also with a due regard to truth.

Previous to a direct consideration of the Charter granted to this Province or Colony, and the better to elucidate the true sense and meaning of it, we would take a view of the state of the English North-American continent at the time when and after possession was first taken of any part of it, by the Europeans. It was then possessed by heathen and barbarous people who had neverthless all that right to the soil and sovereignty in and over the lands they possessed, which God had originally given to man. When, then, being heathen, they had any right or authority to Christian Princes, a right, which had long been assumed by the Pope, to dispose of their lands to others, we will leave to your Excellency and one of understanding and impartial judgment to consider. It is certain they had no other sense forfeited them to any power in Europe. Should we admit that the discovery of the land owned and possessed by Pagan people, gave to any Christian Prince a right and title to the discovery and property, still it is vested in the Crown alone. It was an acquisition of foreign territory, not annexed to the realm of England, and therefore at the absolute disposal of the Crown. For us to be a settled point that the King has a constitutional prerogative to dispose of and alienate any part of his territories not annexed to the realm, is the exercise of this prerogative, Queen Elizabeth granted the first American Charter, and by virtue of it by virtue of discovery, she gave to the first colony of Virginia, the land which was to be held of the Crown by homage, and a certain render, without any reservation to herself of any share in the legislative and executive authority. After the attainment of the King James the first created two companies, to be governed each by laws made by the company his Majesty and not by this Parliament, with power to establish and cause to be made, laws to pass current among them; and with all liberties, franchises and immunities within any of his other dominions to all intents and purposes as if they had been abiding, and born within the realm. A declaration similar to this is contained in the first Charter of this Colony, and in those of other American Colonies, which declare that the Colonies were not intended or conceived to be within the realm of England, tho' within the

allegiance of the English Crown. After this another Charter was granted by the same King James to the Treasurer and Company of Virginia, vesting them with full power and authority, to make, ordain and establish all manner of orders, laws, directions, instructions, forms and ceremonies of government, and magistracy, &c. and necessary, and the same to abrogate, &c. without any reservation for securing their subjection to the Parliament and future laws of England. A third Charter was afterwards granted by the same King to the Treasurer and Company of Virginia, vesting them with power and authority to make laws, with an addition of this clause, "so always that the same be not contrary to the laws and statutes of this our realm of England." The same clause was afterwards copied into the charters of this and other Colonies, with certain variations, such as that the laws should be "consonant to reason," "not repugnant to the laws of England," "as nearly as conveniently may be to the laws, statutes and rights of England," &c. These modes of expression convey the same meaning, and serve to show an intention that the laws of the Colonies should be as much as possible, conformant in the spirit of them to the principles and fundamental laws of the English constitution, its rights and statutes then in being; and by no means to bind the Colonies to a subjection to the supreme authority of the English Parliament. And that this is the true intention we think is further evident from this consideration, that no act of our Colony has ever been brought into Parliament for inspection there, though the laws made in some of them, like the acts of the British Parliament are laid before the King for his assent or disallowance.

We have brought the first American Charters into view, and the state of the country when they were granted, to show that the right of disposing of the lands was in the opinion of those times vested solely in the Crown—that the several Charters conveyed to the grantees, who should settle upon the territories therein granted, all the powers necessary to constitute them free and distinct states—and that the fundamental laws of the English constitution should be the certain and established rule of legislation to which the laws to be made in the several Colonies were to be as nearly as conveniently might be, conformable or similar, which was the true intent and import of the words, "not repugnant to the laws of England," "consonant to reason," and other variant expressions in the different charters. And we would add, that the King in some of the Charters reserves the right to judge of the consonance and similarity of their laws, with the English constitution to himself and not to the Parliament, and in consequence thereof to affirm, or within a limited time, disallow them.

These Charters as well as that afterwards granted to Lord Baltimore, and other Charters are repugnant to the idea of Parliamentary Authority; and to suppose a Parliamentary Authority over the Colonies under such Charters, would necessarily induce that solecism in politics *imperium in imperio*. And the King's repeatedly exercising the prerogative of disposing of the American territory by such charters, together with the silence of the nation thereupon, is an evidence that it was an acknowledged prerogative.

But further to show the sense of the English Crown and nation that the American Colonies and our Predecessors in particular, when they first took possession of this country by a Grant and Charter, did not remain subject to the supreme Authority of Parliament, we beg leave to observe, that when a bill was offered by the two Houses of Parliament to King Charles the first, granting to the subjects of England the free liberty of fishing on the coast of America, he refused his royal assent, declaring as a reason, that "the Colonies were without the realm and jurisdiction of Parliament."

In like manner, his predecessor James the first, had before declared upon a similar occasion, that America was not annexed to the realm, and it was

[For the remainder see the half sheet, page 267.]

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not fitting that Parliament should make laws for those countries." This reason was not secretly, but openly declared in Parliament. If then the Colonies were not annexed to the realm, at the time when their Charters were granted, they never could be afterwards, without their own special consent, which has never since been had, or even asked. If they are not now annexed to the realm they are not a part of the kingdom, and consequently not subject to the legislative authority of the kingdom. For no country, by the common law was subject to the laws or to the Parliament, but the realm of England.

We would, if your Excellency please, subjoin an instance of conduct in King Charles the second, singular indeed, but important to our purpose, who, in 1679, framed an act for a permanent revenue for the support of Virginia, and sent it there by Lord Colpepper, the Governor of that Colony; which was afterwards passed into a law, and "Enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the consent of the General Assembly of Virginia." If the King had judged that Colony to be a part of the realm, he would not, nor could he consistently with Magna Charta, have placed himself at the head of, and joined with any legislative body in making a law to tax the people there, other than the Lords and Commons of England.

Having taken a view of the several Charters of the first Colony in America, if we look into the old Charter of this Colony, we shall find it to be grounded on the same principle, that the right of disposing the territory granted therein was vested in the Crown, as being that Christian Sovereign who first discovered it, when in the possession of heathen; that it was considered as being not within the realm, but only within the fee and feignory of the King. As therefore it was without the realm of England, must not the King, if he had designed that the Parliament should have had any authority over it, have made a special reservation for that purpose? which was not done.

Your Excellency says, it appears from the Charter itself, to have been the sense of our predecessors who first took possession of this Plantation or Colony, that they were to remain subject to the authority of Parliament. You have not been pleased to point out to us how this appears from the Charter, unless it be in the observation you make on the above mentioned clause, viz. "That a favourable construction has been put upon this clause, when it has been allowed to intend such laws of England only as are expressly made to respect us," which you say is by charter a reserve of power and authority to Parliament to bind us by such laws, at least as are made expressly to refer to us, and consequently is a limitation of the power given to the General Court. But we would still recur to the Charter itself, and ask your Excellency how this appears from thence to have been the sense of our predecessors? Is any reservation of power and authority to Parliament thus to bind us, expressed or implied in the Charter? It is evident, that King Charles the first, the very Prince who granted it, as well as his predecessor, had no such idea of the supreme authority of Parliament over the Colony, from their declarations before recited. Your Excellency will then allow us further to ask, by what authority in reason or equity the Parliament can enforce a construction so unfavourable to us. *Quod ab initio injustum est, nullum potest habere juris effectum*, said Grotius. Which with submission to your Excellency, may be rendered thus. Whatever is originally in its nature wrong, can never be justified or made right by repetition and use.

In solemn agreements subsequent reflections ought never to be allowed. The celebrated author whom your Excellency has quoted tells us, that "neither the one nor the other of the interested or contracting powers hath a right to interpret at pleasure." This we mention to show, even upon a supposition that the Parliament had been a party to the contract, the invalidity of any of its subsequent acts, to explain any clause in the Charter; more especially to restrict or make void any clause granted therein to the General Court. An agreement ought to be interpreted "in such a manner as that it may have its effect." But if your Excellency's interpretation of this clause is just, it is a reserve of power and authority to Parliament to bind us by such laws as are made expressly to refer to us, it is not only "a limitation of the power given to the General Court," to legislate, but it may whenever the Parliament think fit, render it of no effect; for it puts it in the power of Parliament to bind us by as many laws as they please, and even to restrain us from making any laws at all. If your Excellency's assertion in this and the next succeeding part of your speech were well grounded, the conclusion would be undeniable, that the Charter even in this clause, "does not confer or reserve any liberties" worth enjoying, but what would have been enjoyed without it, saving that, within any of his Majesty's dominions we are to be considered barely as *not aliens*. You are pleased to say, it cannot "be contended that

by the liberties of free and natural subjects" (which are expressly granted in the Charter to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatever) "is to be understood an exemption from acts of Parliament because not represented there, seeing it is provided by the same charter that such acts shall be in force."

If, says an eminent Lawyer, "the King grants to the town of D. the same liberties which London has, this shall be intended the like liberties." A grant of the liberties of free and natural subjects is equivalent to a grant of the same liberties. And the King, in the first Charter to this Colony expressly grants that it "shall be confirmed, reputed, and adjudged in all cases most favourably on the behalf and for the benefit and behoof of the said Governor and Company, and their Successors—any matter, cause or thing whatsoever to the contrary notwithstanding. It is one of the liberties of free and natural subjects, born and abiding within the realm, to be governed as your Excellency observes, "by laws made by persons in whose election they from time to time have a voice." This is an essential right. For nothing is more evident, than that any people who are subject to the unlimited power of another, must be in a state of abject slavery. It was easily and plainly foreseen that the right of representation in the English Parliament could not be exercised by the people of this Colony. It would be impracticable, if consistent with the English constitution. And for this reason, that this Colony might have and enjoy all the liberties and immunities of free and natural subjects within the realm as stipulated in the Charter it was necessary, and a legislative was accordingly constituted within the Colony, one branch of which consists of Representatives chosen by the people to make all laws, statutes, ordinances, &c. for the well ordering and governing the same, not repugnant to the laws of England, or, as near as conveniently might be, agreeable to the fundamental laws of the English constitution. We are therefore still at a loss to conceive where your Excellency finds it, "provided in the same charter, that such acts," viz. acts of Parliament made expressly to refer to us, "shall be in force" in this Province. There is nothing to this purpose expressed in the charter, or in our opinion even implied in it. And surely it would be very absurd, that a Charter, which is evidently framed upon a supposition and intention, that a colony is and should be considered as not within the realm; and declared by the very Prince who granted it to be within the jurisdiction of Parliament, should yet provide, that the laws which the same Parliament should make expressly to refer to that Colony, should be in force therein. Your Excellency is pleased to ask, "does it follow that the government by their (our ancestors) removal from one part of the dominions to another, loses its authority over that part to which they remove; And that they are freed from the subjection they were under before?" We answer, if that part of the King's dominions to which they removed was not then a part of the realm and was never annexed to it, the Parliament lost no authority over it, having never had such authority; and emigrants were consequently freed from the subjection they were under before their removal. The power and authority of Parliament being constitutionally confined within the limits of the realm and nation collectively, of which alone it is the representing and legislative Assembly. Your Excellency further asks, "will it not rather be said, that by this their voluntary removal, they have relinquished for a time, at least, one of the rights of an English subject, which they might if they pleased have continued to enjoy, and may again enjoy, when they return to the place where it can be exercised?" To which we answer, they never did relinquish the right to be governed by laws made by persons in whose election they had a voice. The King stipulated with them that they should have and enjoy all the liberties of free and natural subjects born within the realm, to all intents, purposes and constructions whatever; that is, that they should be as free as those who were to abide within the realm. Consequently he stipulated with them that they should have and exercise this most essential right, which every Englishman from vassals, and serfs, and slaves, in full sense and meaning; and they did and ought to exercise it, without the necessity of returning for the sake of exercising it, to the nation or realm of England.

We cannot help observing, that your Excellency's manner of reasoning on this point, seems to us to render the most valuable clauses in our Charter of no effect; as if persons born from the realm of England to inhabit in America should hold and exercise the same right of English subjects; and that the exercise of such a manner as to be of any benefit to them, they must, *non inhabit* there, but return to the place where alone it can be exercised. By such construction, the words of the charter can have no sensible meaning. We forbear remarking upon the absurdity of a grant to persons born within the realm, of the same liberties which would have belonged to them if they had been born within the realm.

Your Excellency is disposed to compare this government to the variety of corporations, formed within the kingdom, with power to make and execute by laws, &c. And because they remain subject to the supreme authority of Parliament, to infer, that this Colony is also subject to the same authority. This reasoning appears to us not just. The members of these corporations are resident within the kingdom; and residence subjects them to the authority of Parliament, in which they are also represented: Whereas the people of this Colony are not resident within the realm. The Charter was granted with the express purpose to induce them to reside without the realm; consequently they are not represented in Parliament there. But we would ask your Excellency, Are any of the corporations formed within the kingdom, vested with the power of erecting other subordinate corporations? Of enacting and determining what crimes shall be capital? And constituting courts of common law with all their officers, for the hearing, trying and punishing capital offenders with death? These and many other powers vested in this government plainly show that it is to be considered as a corporation in no other light, than as every state is a corporation. Besides, appeals from the courts of law here, are not brought before the House of Lords, which shows that the Peers of the realm are not the Peers of America; but all such appeals are brought before the King in Council, which is a further evidence that we are not within the realm.

We conceive enough has been said to convince your Excellency, that "when our Predecessors first took possession of this Plantation or Colony by a Grant and Charter from the Crown of England, it was not, and never had been the sense of the kingdom, that they were to remain subject to the supreme authority of Parliament." We will now with your Excellency's leave, enquire what was the sense of our Ancestors of this very important matter.

And as your Excellency has been pleased to tell us, you have not discovered that the supreme authority of Parliament has been called in question even by private and particular persons until within seven or eight years past, except about the time of the anarchy and confusion in England which preceded the Restoration of King Charles the second, we beg leave to remind your Excellency of some parts of your own History of the Massachusetts-Bay. Therein we are informed of the sentiments of "persons of influence" after the Restoration, from which the Historian tells us, some of their conduct, that is of the General Assembly, "may be pretty well accounted for." By the History it appears to have been the opinion of those persons of influence, "that the subjects of any Prince or State had a natural right to remove to any other state, or to any other quarter of the world, unless the state was weakened or exposed, by such removal; and even in that case, if they were deprived of the right of all mankind, liberty of conscience, it would justify a separation and upon their removal their subjection determined and ceased." That "the country to which they had removed, was claimed and possessed by independent Princes, whose right to the Lordship and Sovereignty thereof had been acknowledged by the Kings of England," an instance of which is quoted in the margin: "That they themselves had actually purchased for valuable consideration, not only the soil but the dominion, the Lordship and Sovereignty of those Princes," without which purchase "in the sight of God and men they had no right or title to what they possessed." That they had received a Charter of incorporation from the King, from whence arose a new kind of subjection, namely, "a voluntary civil subjection;" and by this compact "they were to be governed by laws made by themselves." Thus it appears to have been the sentiments of private persons, though persons by whose sentiments the public conduct was influenced, that their removal was a justifiable separation from the Mother State, upon which their subjection to that state determined and ceased. The supreme authority of Parliament, if it had then ever been asserted, must surely have been called in question by men, who had advanced such principles at these times.

The first act of Parliament made expressly to refer to the colonies, was after the restoration. In the reign of King Charles the second, several such acts passed. And the same history informs us there was a difficulty in conforming to them, and the reason of this difficulty is explained in a letter of the General Assembly to their Agent, quoted in the following words: "They apprehended them to be an invasion of the rights, liberties and properties of the subjects of his Majesty in the colony, they not being represented in Parliament; and according to the usual sayings of the learned in the law, the laws of England were bounded within the four seas, and did not reach America; however as his Majesty had signified his pleasure that those acts should be observed in the Massachusetts, they had made provision of the colony that they should be strictly Which provision by a law of their own

